

The Builder.

No. CXLV.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1845.



THE pages of THE BUILDER contain a larger amount of information, connected with the Metropolitan Buildings Act, than is to be found in any other work. They have been open always to communications on the subject; and we have from time to time laid before the public the more important awards and directions issued by the official referees, and all the modifications of the Act, ordered on their recommendation, by the Commissioners of Works and Buildings. Our anxious desire has been to render the operations of the new Act as extensively known as possible, to explain any doubtful points as they arose, and to prevent litigation: to induce the expression of public opinion with a view to an early improvement of the Act, and, by a vigilant surveillance of those who were in authority, to aid in securing a proper administration of it. Our efforts in this respect, we say it with gratitude, have been favourably viewed on all hands.

A right honourable lord, interested officially in the administration of the Act, has been pleased to offer his approbation of the conduct of THE BUILDER, and to express an opinion of "its practical utility;" and from the public generally, we could give many gratifying proofs of confidence, if we thought it right to do so. Even at the risk of a charge of egotism, however, we cannot avoid availing ourselves of this opportunity, of mentioning one unexpected testimonial, recently received from a class of our readers, for whom, though humble, we have much respect, and whose interests and progress we desire, with all earnestness and sincerity to advance. We allude to a letter from the Institution of Builders Foremen (signed W. Allard, secretary), which we should print, if it were not personally flattering.

We have been led without wishing it, away from the simple object of the present notice, which was to say, that from this time forward our opportunities for illustrating the workings of the Buildings Act, will be much greater even than they have been. EVERY AWARD AND CERTIFICATE PUBLISHED BY THE REFEREES, WILL COME BEFORE US THE MOMENT IT IS ISSUED, and the gist of all that are important, will be immediately laid before our readers. Careful references to these cases will be given in the index, so that the volume when completed, will be found of the greatest importance, indeed, we may almost say, indispensable, not merely by architects and builders, but by all who are interested in house property, as owners and holders.

The following are amongst those recently issued:—

CHIMNEY-BARS, CURB-ROOFS, DRAINS, AND COPING.

Mr. T. H. Wyatt gave information against Mr. W. Bellamy, that in building various dwelling-houses in Hackney, he had "done certain matters or things contrary to the provisions of the said Act, namely, having formed certain chimney openings, the jambs whereof project from the face of the wall more than 4½ inches, and the front on either side is less in

width than two-thirds of such opening, without inserting proper iron chimney-bars; and having built the walls of the said houses to a height of 10 feet, without having properly built and made good the drains thereof; and having built the party-walls between the said houses, so as not to project 18 inches in front of the curb-roof; and without being coped with brick on edge in cement, or stone, or being plastered with cement."

The referees, by their award, ordered, "that the said William Bellamy do forthwith provide and let in an iron bar over the opening of every chimney in the said houses (not already provided with the same), as directed by schedule F of the said Act; and that the said William Bellamy do forthwith pull down and replace, by a proper external wall, of the thickness of 13 inches at the least, all the lower and nearly vertical portion of the curbed roof in the back of each of the said four houses, or do make the same conformable to the said Act by adding, upon stone corbels, and to the satisfaction of the surveyor of the district, so much to the party-walls between such roofs as that the said party-walls shall project, at the least, 1 foot and 6 inches beyond every such roof, measured at a right angle with the back of the rafters of such roof, or do in some other way make the same conformable to the said Act; and that the said William Bellamy do forthwith finish the top of each of the said party-walls, with some properly-secured and sufficient water-proof and fire-proof covering, as directed by the third part of schedule D of the said Act.

As regards drainage, the award sets forth what may be important to many of our readers: it states, that "upon the express understanding that it is intended to make sewers, and that the same are now about to be made, and that the said William Bellamy has paid, or has engaged to pay, seven shillings per foot towards the expenses of the said sewers or part thereof, and that it is his intention to form proper drains, from all of the said houses into such sewers as soon as the same shall be made, and inasmuch as many instances have occurred, in which buildings are commenced in streets and roads, in which sewers have not been built, but in which it is the declared intention of the parties immediately to build sewers: and inasmuch as the said official referees are of opinion, that the intention of the said Act to promote the improvement of the drainage of buildings would be defeated if, in such cases, cesspools were made, and the buildings drained to such cesspools instead of sewers, and have therefore determined to recommend to the Commissioners of Works and Buildings a modification of the said rule, to the effect that it shall be lawful in such cases to defer the making of such drains, with the special consent of the official referees first had and obtained,"—they will make no direction thereon, until the result of such recommendation be known.

TEMPORARY WORKSHOPS.

Mr. S. Fowler having erected a workshop at Bermoodsey for temporary use, not in accordance with the Act (through ignorance), received notice from the district surveyor to that effect, and appealed to the referees.

It was admitted that the external inclosures were not wholly formed of brick or of stone; "that the said Building is detached from any other building, and that it is separated from the next adjoining premises by a brick wall; that the roof is covered with pantiles, and that no fire-place has been built therein; and further, that the said building has been

built as a temporary workshop for the execution of a pressing contract, and that it will be pulled down in the course of four or five months from the date of hearing."

Mr. Hosking determined "that the building in question is not conformable to the said Act, but I defer to make any direction thereon for a period of six months from the 22nd day of September last."

INSULATED BUILDINGS.

With reference to an application from Mr. Lee, for leave to erect smiths' and coopers' shops (of timber and wood-work) at Wandsworth, at the distance of 22 feet from one building, and 25 feet from another, both in his own occupation, the referees awarded, "that if the buildings be in the same possession and occupation with the proposed building, and be themselves insulated within the meaning of the said Act, and if the proposed building be so situated that there be not within 30 feet therefrom, any load or any building not in the same possession and occupation therewith, then such proposed building will be an insulated building within the meaning of the said Act."

Wood construction was therefore permitted.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

With regard to a request by Mr. Weymouth, to know, amongst other things, whether a small slaughter-house, at Crouch Ead, Hornsey, was a building of such a nature that, in accordance with the 55th section of the Act, no structure could be erected nearer to it than 50 feet, the referees decided, "that if the slaughter-house be used for the slaughtering of animals for human food only, and be not used for the business of a general slaughterer, but in connection with the trade of a retail butcher, and particularly with the trade of a butcher's shop thereto adjoining, then the said slaughter-house is not to be deemed to be a building used for the business of a slaughterer, or for a business anxious or offensive within the meaning of the said Act."

OBSTRUCTION OF LIGHT AND AIR.

Messrs. Elger and Kell, being about to erect premises at the back of No. 16, St. James's-square, which Mr. Howell, the owner of No. 15, considered would obstruct the light and air of his premises, applied through his architect, Mr. Marsh Nelson, for the interference of the official referees to prevent the builders from proceeding. The opinion of Messrs. Barry, Hardwick, Tite, and Peacock confirmed his view as to the obstruction. An area was to be left as prescribed by the Act. It was contended for Mr. Howell that if the referees were called on by the Act (as is the case) to prevent any projections from a wall which would obstruct the light and air, or be injurious to the adjoining houses, the Act could not permit the wall itself to be built or raised, so as to effect in a greater degree, that which the projections from it would do in a smaller degree.

The referees determined that so far as related to the interruption of light and air, they had no jurisdiction in the matter referred to them.

SCHOOLS AT CARDIFF.—A building for a day-school on the British system is now being erected in Cardiff by subscription, principally of the Baptists in that town and the vicinity. The style is Tudor. Mr. Clinton is the architect.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY.—The session will commence on Thursday next, the 20th instant. The anniversary meeting will be held on Monday, December 1st.